

Sanction/Child SafetyNet

January 2005



In Washington, WorkFirst parents must work, look for work or prepare for work at least 32 hours per week. Each parent signs an individual plan stating their responsibilities and what support the state will provide to help them succeed. Some parents, however, refuse to participate with the program's requirements.

What is a WorkFirst sanction?

A WorkFirst sanction is a penalty that applies when a parent in the family is able but unwilling to participate in required WorkFirst activities. A WorkFirst sanction penalty is a 40% reduction to a family's grant and includes a requirement that a third-party contractor manage the payment. After four weeks of continuous participation, the penalty is removed and the family's grant increased the 1st of the month following the four weeks of participation.

Why does WorkFirst impose penalties for non-participation?

The goal of the WorkFirst program is to have each parent participate full time in work, looking for work, or preparing for work. It is very important that WorkFirst program specialists determine whether the parent is refusing to participate or is unable to comply. If the parent is unable to meet the requirements of his/her individual plan, then a new plan will be written for activities that will help the parent resolve issues.

What is a Child SafetyNet (CSNP)?

CSNP is a penalty that applies when a family has been on cash assistance for over 60 months and a parent is able but unwilling to participate in required WorkFirst activities. Under this penalty, the family's cash assistance is reduced by 40% and sent to a third-party contractor who uses the money exclusively to meet the basic needs of the children in the home. A parent must participate for twelve weeks before the penalty is removed. The grant payment is restored the 1st of the month following the twelve weeks of participation.

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- Mandatory case staffings – meetings of everyone who is helping the family – are conducted to ensure that a parent is able to participate but refuses, and that the sanctions are applied appropriately.
- As of December 2004, 10 percent of WorkFirst families are in sanction and 2.2 percent are receiving Child SafetyNet payments.

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For more information about the WorkFirst program, visit
www.workfirst.wa.gov

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